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## LETTER OF SYMPATHY, &c.

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TO THE MODERATOR AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA IN CONNEC-  
TION WITH THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH OF SCOT-  
LAND.

Dear Brethren,

THE Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland embrace the earliest opportunity of conveying to you an expression of their sympathy in the painful and peculiar circumstances in which you are placed, as well as an expression of their highest approbation of your conduct in the trials with which you have been visited.

The Committee deeply regret that the dissensions which have so much disturbed the peace of the Church in our own land should have found their way to the land of your adoption, and that divisions so unseemly, and so injurious to the interests of religion, should have found a place among those, who, as the servants of one Master, and the ministers of one Church, had dwelt so long together, like brethren, in unity.

But we are fully persuaded that you are not the cause, and therefore not chargeable with the consequences, of this unhappy strife. You have maintained your principles with great steadfastness, and defended them with great ability, and you will have this testimony from the intelligent and upright of every country, that you have acted like consistent men and Christian ministers.

Your great offence, in the eyes of your opponents, seems to be this, that you refuse to disown a Church, which has done nothing to forfeit your affection, or call for such a deed on your part. The Church of Scotland has never claimed any authority, nor exercised any control over your Synod; neither has she ever possessed, nor desired to possess the right of any such interference. Her ambition and her efforts have been limited to the cultivation of brotherly affection, and the rendering of pecuniary aid to those who had many claims on her regard. The accusations lately brought against her in your Synod, as formerly in many of her own courts, are as destitute of truth as they are devoid of charity, and we feel refreshed with the meekness and the power with which you have exposed and refuted all such errors.

You have our best thanks for the able manner in which you have pleaded the cause, and vindicated the principles of our national establishment. The Church of Scotland continues to possess, as she has ever done, spiritual independence and spiritual freedom, and those who say that she has surrendered her liberty, either ignorantly misunderstand or wilfully misrepresent, her condition. She is jealously alive to all undue interference with her rights and privileges, and as she never has compromised, so we trust she never will compromise, her character, by giving up what necessarily belongs to her as a Church of Christ. And



adhering to her in her day of trial, you will be gratified to learn that almost all the vacancies, created by the painful and extensive secession which took place in May, 1843, have been filled up with able and acceptable ministers, and that she is now in a state of as great efficiency as in the brightest days of her past history.

Attached as you are to our country by the ties of birth and kindred, and to our Church by a full approbation of her doctrines and discipline, we cannot doubt that the remembrance of former times will cause you to feel more than a common interest in all that is passing amongst us ; and we beg to assure you that such recollections strengthen the affection we should ever cherish toward you, as they will increase our efforts to promote your peace and advance your prosperity. With you the harvest is great, and the labourers are few, and we feel ourselves called on, by every consideration, to assist you to the utmost of our power.

We are not ignorant of the means that have been employed to entice the people among whom you labour, to leave your ministry ; of the efforts that have been made to sow the seeds of dissention among yourselves ; and though these endeavours have been attended with partial success, we yet rejoice to think that so large a majority of the office-bearers of your Synod and of your people have resolved to maintain their connexion and intercourse with the Church of Scotland. This resolution we regard as alike worthy of your intelligence, integrity, and Christian feeling ; and it affords us sincere pleasure to know that your opponents have not succeeded in their endeavour to separate you from a Church which has ever taken a lively interest in all that concerns your welfare.

We could wish that those who boast so much of Christian freedom would allow others to enjoy the Christian liberty they claim for themselves, and that you were left undisturbed to prosecute the important work to which you have been called, by disseminating among your people the glad tidings of the Gospel. It is our confident hope, as it is our earnest prayer, that the Master whom you serve may support you under all your trials, and direct you in the path which He himself will approve, so that all events, however seemingly adverse, may be overruled for promoting His own glory and the good of those that love Him.

Knowing well the peculiar difficulties with which you are encompassed, we beg to repeat the expression of our sympathy with you in all your trials, and to renew the assurance we have given, that you shall have all the assistance at our command, in whatever way, and at whatever time it can be rendered.

Signed in name and by appointment of the Acting Colonial Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by

(Signed)

THOMAS CLARK,

Vice-Treasurer.

[Received on the 20th September, 1844.]

## A N A C T

### DECLARING THE SPIRITUAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

[Passed September 20th, 1844.]

**W**HEREAS, this Synod has always, from its first establishment, possessed a perfectly free and supreme jurisdiction over all the congregations and ministers in connection therewith; and although the independence and freedom of this Synod, in regard to all things spiritual, cannot be called in question, but has been repeatedly and in most explicit terms affirmed, not only by itself, but by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, yet as in present circumstances it is expedient that this independence be asserted and declared by a special act:—

It is, therefore, hereby declared, That this Synod has always claimed and possessed, does now possess, and ought always, in all time coming, to have and exercise a perfectly free, full, final, supreme and uncontrolled power of jurisdiction, discipline and government, in regard to all matters ecclesiastical and spiritual, over all the ministers, elders, church members and congregations under its care, without the right of review, appeal, complaint or reference by or to any other Court or Courts whatsoever, in any form or under any pretence; and that in all cases that may come before it for judgement, the decisions and deliverances of this Synod shall be final. And this Synod further declares, that if any encroachment on this supreme power and authority shall be attempted or threatened, by any person or persons, Court or Courts whatsoever, then the Synod, and each and every member thereof, shall, to the utmost of their power, resist and oppose the same. And whereas, the words in the designation of the Synod, “In connection with the Church of Scotland,” have been misunderstood or misrepresented by many persons, it is hereby declared, that the said words imply no right of jurisdiction or control, in any form whatever, by the Church of Scotland over this Synod, but denote merely the connection of origin, identity of standards, and ministerial and church communion. And it is further enacted and declared, that this supreme and free jurisdiction is a fundamental and essential part of the constitution of this Synod; and that this may be fully known to all those who may hereafter seek admission into our Church, it is enjoined that all the Presbyteries shall preserve a copy of this Act, and cause it to be read over and assented to, by every minister and probationer who may apply for ordination or induction into any pastoral charge.

TO THE MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE FREE PROTESTING CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Reverend Sir,

WE, the Ministers and Elders of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland, in Synod assembled, feel ourselves constrained, by an imperative sense of duty to ourselves and to the people under our care, to address to your Church a few words of remonstrance respecting the course of conduct which you have pursued towards the Presbyterian Church in this country.

Placed, as we are, in a position entirely different from that of the Church in Scotland; exempted from all the grievances, either real or imaginary, which gave rise to the disruption there; and possessing a full, free, and unquestioned right of jurisdiction in all things spiritual, we naturally supposed that we were not called, either by duty or expediency to agitate questions which neither did nor could practically concern us.

Amid many difficulties and privations, which are neither experienced nor conceived of by Ministers of any denomination in Scotland, we were engaged in the peaceful prosecution of our labours in this extensive region. In such circumstances, we should naturally have expected, from all Churches professing the same faith, every possible encouragement and assistance. It was, therefore, with much surprise and regret that we observed in some of the organs of the Free Church, expressions of a desire to produce, or at least to countenance, a disruption in our Synod, and division and strife among our congregations.

We were for a time willing to ascribe this to ignorance of our condition, or to a want of consideration of the position of our Church. But from the subsequent conduct of the Free Church in publishing and sending out letters, addresses, and other documents calculated to excite the feelings of our people, and commissioning deputations for the same purpose, we are compelled, however unwillingly, to conclude that there exists a desire, on the part of the leaders of that Church, to disturb and distract the congregations under our care. We cannot regard such conduct as wise, generous, or Christain; but still, when we think of the high character and the beneficent efforts of many of the members of your Church, we cherish the hope, that when the case is fully and fairly represented, you will see cause to adopt a different line of conduct.

We enjoy the very same liberty and stand in the very same position as that for which those who now constitute the Free Church so long contended, a position similar to that of the Irish Presbyterian Church. We are entirely free, in every sense of the word, as the Free Church itself, or as any Church in the world, whether established or not established.

It was admitted by every member of the Synod, present at Kingston in July last, even by those who left us, "that none of the causes which led to the disruption in Scotland, exist here," and, in the published words of those very persons; it is declared, "whatever may be the differences between the Established and Free Churches in Scotland, they utterly vanish in Canada." It cannot therefore be regarded as unreasonable that, when called upon, suddenly, to make a change in our position, which we clearly saw would plunge us into unnumbered evils, without the smallest corresponding benefit, we should at least pause and deliberate, before taking a step which would be attend-



ed with such fearful consequences ; and we certainly had a right to expect that, before being accused of acting from unworthy motives, and exposed to unjust censures, both here and in Scotland, as being indifferent or hostile to the Redeemer's cause, we should have been, at the very least, requested, in a calm and Christian manner, to state the reasons of our conduct.

We claim for ourselves the same liberty of judging and acting which we concede to others ; and we solemnly declare that in all we have done in this matter, we have acted according to our conscientious conviction of duty, and with the most earnest desire to do what would be most conducive to the spiritual welfare of our people, and we cannot but feel ourselves therefore deeply aggrieved, when we see charges, which we must characterise as reckless and unwarrantable, brought against those who, to say the least, have been as faithful and labourious in the service of their Lord, as they who bring forward such allegations ; men who have borne the burden and heat of the day, who have spent years of ill-requited labour, in gathering in those who, but for their exertions, would have been strangers to the means of grace.

Let it not for a moment be supposed that we entertain any hard or hostile feelings towards the Free Church. Many of its members we revere and love ; we admire their devotedness and their zeal ; and we cannot doubt that, in taking the position they assumed, they acted on the most sincere convictions of duty.

We should therefore gladly welcome that Church as a fellow labourer with us in evangelizing this country ; and surely the land is wide enough for us both—there is work enough, to employ all our exertions and all our means. Why, then, may we not say to each other, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me : is not the whole land before us ?" Why should our feelings of Christian regard, and our desire of friendly coöperation, be thwarted by the stern aspect of hostility ? Why should the late deviation in our Synod—a division which may justly be termed the most perfectly uncalled-for, the most utterly unaccountable schism which ever took place in the Church of Christ,—be encouraged and perpetuated by your influence, instead of being healed, as it might possibly be, by your interposition ? Why should the able and zealous missionaries you send among us, exert their energies in endeavouring to distract—that is to destroy, our settled congregations, instead of carrying the message of salvation into those numerous places of our land, where a preacher's voice is seldom heard ? Why should two bodies of Christians, agreeing in doctrine, worship, and discipline, differing only in name, and very little even in that, fill the land with contentions, and excite the grief of the Christian and the scorn of the ungodly ?

We trust that this representation will be taken, as it is intended, in good part : we are fully convinced that the course adopted by your Church towards ours, has tended to excite feelings of dislike in the minds of many persons in this country, who were once disposed to regard the Free Church with affection and esteem, and that it would conduce to your honour and advantage, no less than to our peace and welfare, to adopt a course of conduct more liberal, more conciliatory, and more Christian.

At Montreal, this twenty third day of September, 1844, in name, in presence and by appointment of the Synod.

(Signed) JOHN COOK, D. D.

MODERATOR.

ADDRESS OF THE MODERATOR (THE REV. DR. COOK)  
TO THE SYNOD, IMMEDIATELY BEFORE ITS DISSOLUTION.

Brethren,

THE business of the Synod is now brought to a close. We met, and we now separate, in circumstances of peculiar difficulty and discouragement, lamenting the continued alienation of so many of our brethren for whom we had cherished the utmost regard and affection,—and clearly foreseeing many formidable evils, affecting both the social order and spiritual well-being of the community, which can hardly fail to arise, nay, which are already arising, out of that alienation. Our meeting has not, however, I trust, been altogether in vain. We have reason to be thankful for the harmonious spirit which has prevailed in all our deliberations, and under the influence of which we have adopted certain measures, which it is surely not unreasonable to hope, may have some influence in restoring the peace of our now distracted Church, and promoting its real prosperity.

We have redeemed the pledge given at the last Synod, concerning the supreme jurisdiction of this Court, by the Act anent its spiritual independence. And this, together with the full and distinct recognition of that independence, which came so opportunely from the General Assembly's Colonial Committee, cannot fail to disabuse the minds of our people from many false impressions which they had taken up, as to the subordinate position of this Synod, in regard to the Church of Scotland. The Act passed on this subject does also settle clearly and definitively the nature of our connexion with that Church,—a subject on which there has been so much misapprehension and misrepresentation,—declaring that connexion to consist solely in our origin, identity of standards, and ministerial and church communion.

It may surely be anticipated that this Act will not be without some weight with the brethren who have left us ; and that it may go some way to the restoration of that union which is so much to be desired. The judgment formed by some of recent events in the Church of Scotland, may be such, as to render all communion with that Church, in their apprehension, dangerous and sinful. With those who take this extreme view, it is not to be expected that any negotiation for union can be attended with success. But we have not understood that this is the view taken by our brethren ; and we do trust, that common ground may yet be found, on which we can conscientiously meet, in the undoubted independence of the Church, in the practical administration of its affairs, on principles held alike by all of us, and on the principle contained in our address to the Governor General, that diversity of opinion, as to the proceedings of the Parent Church, does not warrant the breach of our own ecclesiastical union.

The appointment of a committee to enter into negotiations with our seceding brethren, will, we trust, be received by them as a token of our sincere desire to have our former relations restored. The success of any such negotiation will be most materially affected by the temper with which the Synod's recommendation is attended to, by parties adhering to this Church, to use all discretion and forbearance in asserting the rights of property,—and by the spirit with which our proposal is received to appoint Joint Committees for the purpose of arranging diffi-

culties, and preventing cases of greivous hardship to either party. If no unnecessary difficulties are raised in this matter, and, as has happily been the case hitherto, no grounds arise of personal unkindness and alienation, we may not despair, under the blessing of God, of being yet a peaceful and united Church. But whether with a view to this most desirable consummation, or simply to the existence and true prosperity of our Church as now composed, I cannot do better than resume now the same strain of admonition in which you were addressed at the opening of the Synod.

Never was it more needful to our work that the principles of spiritual life should be in lively exercise in our own souls. We came from a Church, one of whose most grievous sins in all our day has been, that she cared and laboured so little to stir up the gift of God in those whom she recognized as candidates for the ministry. We have come to a state of things in this Province, in no wise favourable to the exercise of high religious principle; and now, in the unhappy dissensions which have arisen among us, we have thrown in our way another most hostile element to the growth of personal godliness. Our minds are too likely to be occupied with matters, which, whatever view we take of them, cannot be supposed to be the food of the spiritual man, or fitted in themselves to advance the divine life in the soul. We shall be tempted to engage in that strife and controversy which are any thing but favourable to pure and holy feeling,—strife and controversy, bitter, it may be feared from the past experience of the Church, in proportion to the narrow ground of difference between the combatants. I know how lightly some speak of such dissensions in the Church of God. I know how some, because certain that out of them, God will bring good, can scarce believe that they are evil. I know how some give it forth, that in the work of the ministry, the principle of opposition may be advantageously called into exercise, just as in the speculations of mercantile life;—but they who so speak, know not what they speak, nor whereof they affirm. By such principle, it is true, a greater bustle may be created about external duties—more visits may be paid, more sermons preached, more prayers *in public*, uttered; but, oh! is not the pure and holy feeling in which lies the chief charm and power of these duties and exercises, apt to be lowered and displaced? Alas! it is not given to the wrath of man to work the righteousness of God.

Assuredly it is no change in the position of our Church—in the designation by which it has been hitherto known, or its relations to distant and contending bodies—which will make us other than we have been, or more successful labourers in the vineyard of our great Lord. Exercising in this land, over that portion of the Church of which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers, a perfectly free and uncontrolled jurisdiction—called by no power, civil or ecclesiastical, to act contrary to the convictions of our own minds, nor restrained from any good, to which conscience and the word of God prompt us—free to protest against evil wherever it exists, and to express our sympathy with those whose different circumstances appeared to them to require a different testimony,—and holding out the right hand of fellowship to all Churches, adhering to our standards of doctrine and government—what is there in our position about which to wrangle, and devour and provoke one another? Better were it to be thankful to God for the advantages we enjoy, and faithful in the improvement of them; and if we are to provoke one another, surely it should be to love and to good works. What we should desire and pray for, is a deeper sense of religion in our own souls,—a deeper sense of the value of immortal souls,—a greater ten-



derness for those who are perishing in impenitence and unbelief. What we need is greater love in our own hearts to our great Master and his work,—greater zeal, fidelity and diligence in the discharge of the duties He hath imposed on us. In regard of our grievous short-comings in duty, God is now calling us to repentance, and if we listen not to the call, He will put shame on us, and reject us, and refuse to bless our ministry—not because of any thing in the frame or constitution of our Church, but because we are really not within the pale ourselves, of that true and spiritual Church to which the promises belong, with which Christ is ever graciously present, and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.

For the present prosperity, or we may say existence, of our Church, it is necessary *we* should be men of God. For its future prosperity and existence,—a matter most sacredly our duty to provide for, in as far as God gives us the means,—we must refuse all candidates for the ministry who appear not on good evidence, to be such; and we must raise up such for the work of the ministry from among the youth of our own people. In the discharge of this latter duty appears to me to lie, under God, the hope of our Church. Long before the unhappy disruption of the Parent Church, it was with great difficulty that suitable ministers could be procured from it; and the difficulty is increased now, when in either division of the Church, all whose services can be made available are required. I would heartily rejoice in this difficulty, notwithstanding its immediate inconveniences, if it would drive us to the right position, which, as it seems to me, we should occupy in this Province, and make us feel and act for ourselves, not looking continually to a distant land, resting our hopes on what its people will do for us, and having respect in our own ecclesiastical administration to what they will think or say of us; but looking to our own people and to our great Master, that he would put a right spirit in us and in them. We are in a position of independence: let us not show a dependent spirit. By God's goodness we have the means of giving a thorough education for the work of the ministry. Let us seek for youth of promise for talent and piety, and enable them to take advantage of those means. Let it be our great aim to rear up a pious ministry—a ministry truly devoted to the work of winning souls, and God shall yet prove a wall of fire around our Zion, and the glory in the midst of her, and over all the glory there shall be a defence.

Of those brethren who have left us, we have not yet, I trust, begun to think as a wholly separate body.—Not *next* to ourselves, but equally with ourselves; and as if they were still a part of us, it must be, and it is, our desire and prayer that they should take the same views of duty which have now been suggested, and that the same revival, for which we long, may be vouchsafed to them. This we desire for their good and for our good; we desire it for the good of the Church of Christ; we desire it for the speedier arrival of that day, which we shall still hope may be at no great distance, when peace and union shall be again restored. Certainly, the more they and we grow in personal goodness—the more they and we engage heartily in the special work of the ministry—the more they and we labour to raise up men of God among ourselves, to take our places when we shall be gathered to our fathers, the more will all grounds of separation between us vanish away. While our people shall have immediate cause to take up the language of the prophet,—“How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.” Ultimately, “the watchmen of Zion shall also lift up the voice: with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see, eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.”









